

*What is clay?  
Where is clay found?  
Why do people use clay?*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_

# CLAY

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## **Where does it come from, how is it made, how many types are there, and what are its uses?**

### **Where does clay come from?**

Clay is a Natural Resource, which means it is not made by humans. Rather clay comes from the earth. Clay is in fact all around us, it is part of the earth's crust and the surface on which we tread. It is usually found in little pockets that appear a couple of feet below the ground.

### **How is clay made?**

Clay is originally formed from granite rock, which makes up a large part of the earth's crust. Over millions of years of weathering, (through coming into contact with sunlight, rain and ice) granite rock has gone through a physical change, being broken down into smaller and smaller particles. It is this process that transforms granite rock into clay.

## **There are two types of clay PRIMARY & SECONDARY**

### **PRIMARY CLAY**

Primary clay has remained in the same place for millions of years, never moving from the position where it began life as granite rock. The color of primary clay is white. Primary clay is not very plastic and not the best clay for being moulded and shaped.

### **SECONDARY CLAY**

Secondary clay is the kind of clay which we will be using. It is a very malleable and plastic like material, allowing artists to manipulate it into various shapes and forms. Secondary clays unlike primary are not found in the same place as where they started life as Granite Rock. Rather other millions of years, they have been moved and carried around by flowing water, usually settling in the side of riverbeds. Also, secondary clays differ from primary clay in terms of color. Where as Primary clay is only white, secondary clay comes in a variety of colors. Ranging from red to yellow and black to gray. The reason for these different colors is due to the fact that they have been moved around. What happens is that on their journey they have come into contact and mixed with different minerals. These different minerals have mixed with the clay and are responsible for producing the different colors.

## **WHY DO PEOPLE USE CLAY?**

Because clay is one of the world's great natural resources, it has been used by humans for longer and for more reasons than any other material. We know that for at least nine thousand years, humans have used clay to make bricks for shelters and houses. Today clay is still an important material, being used for hundreds of purposes. These purposes range from: ornaments, plates, cups, tea pots, washbasins, insulation for electrical cables and power-lines, water pipes, and even the tiles on the space shuttle. (This is because they are great for reflecting and absorbing heat). The United States both imports and exports clays and clay products. It is estimated that the United States consumes about 37.6 million tons of clays each year.

**Answer the following questions using complete sentences.**

1. What is meant by the term "Natural Resource"? (2 pts)
2. What is the name of the rock which clay comes from? (2 pts)
3. What is the type of clay we will use? Further, what is the reason for using this type of clay versus the other sort? (4 pts)
4. In your own words describe the difference between primary and secondary clay. (3 pts)
5. Why does secondary clay come in different colors? (2 pts)
6. Create a list of ten objects made from clay. (5 pts)